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PROUDLY SERVING THE 2nd DISTRICT OF ILL.

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JACKSON ON SOTU: ENDING UNEMPLOYMENT IS DIFFERENT THAN CREATING JOBS

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

- The Declaration of Independence - July 4, 1776

"This Republic had its beginning, and grew to its present strength, under the protection of certain inalienable political rights -- among them the right of free speech, free press, free worship, trial by jury, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures.□ They were our rights

to life and liberty.

As our Nation has grown in size and stature, however -- as our industrial economy expanded -- these political rights proved inadequate to assure us equality in the pursuit of happiness.

We have come to a clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. "Necessitous men are not free men." People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.

In our day these economic truths have become accepted as self-evident. We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all regardless of station, race, or creed."

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt, State of the Union, January 11, 1944

"We are not coming to engage in any histrionic gesture. We are not coming to tear up Washington. We are coming to demand that the government address itself to the problem of poverty. We read one day, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." But if a man doesn't have a job or an income,

he has neither life nor liberty nor the possibility for the pursuit of happiness. He merely exists."

- Martin Luther King Jr., Remaining Awake through a Great Revolution, March 31, 1968

Today, Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. issued the following statement:

"Tonight's speech should be measured by whether or not the President focuses on ending unemployment, not on what he says about 'job creation.' I believe that creating jobs is fundamentally different than ending unemployment. The Congress has very limited power to create jobs using the familiar means of tax credits and other incentives to the private sector. Those levers may create a few jobs at the margins - it may be one of many reasons that a company decides to build a factory somewhere - but they will not spur widespread job creation. We only have to look at the economy over the last few years to know that. Congress cannot create jobs unless it's planning to hire the unemployed.

"Congress can, however, end unemployment. As President Roosevelt suggested, by amending the constitution to include economic rights and creating a jobs investment program modeled on the Works Progress Administration, we can bring the unemployment rate down to virtually zero. That is a fundamentally different proposition than anything the President will offer tonight, that the Republican majority will bring to the floor of the House, or that the Democratic minority is contemplating.

"We must recognize the inadequacy of Congress and the Presidency to end unemployment through the conventional means. Franklin Delano Roosevelt recognized this, as did Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The economy is presently creating less than 100,000 jobs a month. That does not even come close to addressing our fundamental unemployment that affects the 2 million '99ers' that have already seen their benefits expire, or the 14.5 million Americans who are unemployed and looking for a job. The economy would have to grow by 334,000 jobs per

month in order to employ the unemployed who are expected to lose their benefits in 2011. Those statistics mean that the marginal 'job creating' measures that the Congress and the President typically contemplate are simply not enough.

"In 1968 unemployment for all Americans was under 4%, but for African-Americans unemployment was near 7%. In 2011, unemployment nationally is 9.4%, but for African-Americans it is conservatively 15.6% and as high as 25% in some communities. In essence, the conditions have gotten worse for the unemployed, underemployed and economically insecure in our nation since Martin Luther King Jr. called for a massive non-violent civil disobedience campaign to shut down Federal government just a few days before his assassination.

"Republicans have made a decision to limit the role of government in solving this historic problem and instead have opted to support free market solutions that have failed to close the gap between the employed and the unemployed, the underemployed and the economically insecure. Democrats have called for 'job creation' measures that will not fundamentally address the chronic unemployment problem that our country faces.

"So let me be clear. Democrats and Republicans have spent billions of dollars offering incentives and tax breaks to the private sector through various schemes to 'grow the economy,' but as the Dow Jones Industrial Average approaches 12,000 the economy is growing and unemployment persists."

"We need a new paradigm - one that is focused on ending unemployment once and for all."

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